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In the UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

First Named Inventor: Thomas Völkel

Application No. 10/764,295   Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

Filed: January 23, 2004

Title: SPECTRAL EVALUATION OF AN OBJECT TO BE TESTED

Examiner: Jeffrey R. West   Art Unit: 2857

⇨ **FACSIMILE ATTN TO: JEFFREY R. WEST   FAX NO.: 571-273-8300**

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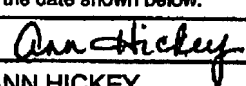## CENTRAL FAX CENTER
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	Art Unit	2857
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ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)

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☐ Amendment / Reply	☐ Petition	☒ Appeal Communication to TC (Appeal Notice, Brief, Reply Brief)
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SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT

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PATENT
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Inventor:	Thomas Völkel	)
		) Group Art Unit: 2857
Serial No.:	10/764,295	)
		) Examiner: Jeffrey R. West
Filed:	January 23, 2004	)

Title: SPECTRAL EVALUATION OF AN OBJECT TO BE TESTED

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APPELLANT'S BRIEF UNDER 37 CFR 41.10

This brief corrects the issues raised in the Notification of Non-compliant Appeal Brief dated July, 24 2007. Appropriate fees were previously paid with Notice of Appeal dated November 21, 2006, and Appellant's Brief dated January 8, 2007. Accordingly, no additional fee is due with the filing of the present Brief.

1.   REAL PARTY IN INTEREST - 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (i)

The real party in interest in the present Appeal is the assignee of record of the present application, Siemens Aktiengesellschaft.

2.   RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES - 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (ii)

There is no other appeal, interference or judicial proceeding that is related to or that will directly affect, or that will be directly affected by, or that will have a bearing on the Board's decision in this Appeal.

3.   STATUS OF CLAIMS - 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (iii)

Claims cancelled: 2, 3, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17 and 19.

Claims withdrawn but not cancelled: none.

Claims pending: 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, and 18.

Claims allowed: none.

Claims rejected: 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, and 18.

Claim rejections appealed: 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, and 18.

4.   STATUS OF AMENDMENTS - 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (iv)

There was an amendment filed on 18 April 2006 under 37 CFR 1.116 subsequent to the final rejection, and that amendment was entered pursuant to the Advisory Action mailed 19 April 2006.

5.   SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER- 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (v)

Claim 1

Independent claim 1 is directed to a method for evaluation of a rotating object, such as a machine. See page 5, lines 11-12 of the English language translation specification. The method provides a first operating parameter that is an actual rotational speed value. A frequency spectrum 22, 23 (FIG. 2) of the object to be tested is automatically recorded by measuring means. The frequency spectrum has first amplitude values which depend on first frequency values. The first frequency values of the frequency spectrum are automatically used for normalization in relation to the actual rotational speed value. An alarm

2

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

curve 2 is automatically formed with second amplitude values which depend on second frequency values. See page 6, lines 30-34 of the specification. The second frequency values of the alarm curve are automatically used for normalization in relation to the actual rotational speed value. See page 7, lines 1-4 of the specification. The second amplitude values of the alarm curve are automatically changed according to a second operating parameter. See page 7, lines 20-24. The operating states of the object to be tested are characterized by the second operating parameter which is proportional to a load of the object to be tested. See page 9, lines 13-16 of the specification. The operating states of the object to be tested are further characterized by a third operating parameter which is proportional to a temperature of the object to be tested. See page 9, lines 16-18 of the specification. The first amplitude values of the normalized frequency spectrum are automatically compared with the second amplitude values of the alarm curve, which is changed according to the second operating parameter, and the third operating parameter. A result of the comparison is used to evaluate the object to be tested. See page 9, lines 21-36 and page 10, lines 1-5 of the specification.

Claim 18

Independent claim 18 is directed to a method for evaluating a rotating machine. See page 5, lines 11-12 of the specification. The method allows establishing an alarm curve, such as alarm curves 3, 4, 5 (FIG. 4 through FIG. 6) of vibration amplitude data versus frequency for a first rotating speed of a rotating machine operating at a first load value. Actual vibration amplitude data versus frequency are gathered from the rotating machine at a second rotating speed different than the first rotating speed and at a second load value different than the first load value. The actual vibration amplitude data versus frequency are normalized with respect to the first rotating speed. The alarm curve is adjusted to account for the difference between the first and second load values. See page 8,

3

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

lines 10-28 of the specification. The alarm curve is established for a first temperature. The actual vibration amplitude data versus frequency are gathered at a second temperature different from the first temperature. See page 8, lines 30-31 and page 9, lines 1-19. The alarm curve is further adjusted to account for the difference between the first and second temperatures. The normalized data and the adjusted alarm curve are compared to evaluate the rotating machine. See page 9, lines 21-36 and page 10, lines 1-5 of the specification.

6.   GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED UPON APPEAL - 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (vi)

A)   Whether claims 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over International Application Publication No. WO 99/60351 (hereinafter Lofall) in view of US Pat. No. 5,922,963 (hereinafter Piety), and further in view of EP Publication No. 0 908 805 (hereinafter Hoth).

7.   ARGUMENT-37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (vii)

A.   *Regarding the rejection of claims 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lofall in view of Piety and further in view of Hoth.*

Appellant argues that the Lofall/Piety/Hoth combination does not constitute an appropriate *prima facie* combination for renderings claims 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, and 18 unpatentable because such combination, even if combined as suggested by the Examiner, fails to teach or suggest each of the claimed elements and/or operational relationships. With regard to the rejections applied against claims 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, and 18, it is appellant's belief that not all of the rejected claims stand or fall together. More specifically, independent claim 1 and

4

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

dependent claims 4-8, 10, 13, 15 stand together. However, claim 18, a distinct independent claim, should be grouped separately from claims 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, for purposes of this appeal.

A.1   _Arguments Regarding Claim 1_

Appellant respectfully submits that the Lofall/Piety/Hoth combination fails to describe or suggest the method set forth in claim 1.

Claim 1 in part recites that the operating states of the object to be tested are characterized by a second operating parameter which is proportional to a load of the object to be tested, and are also characterized by a third operating parameter which is proportional to a temperature of the object to be tested. The amplitude values of the alarm curve are changed according to the second operating parameter, and the third operating parameter.

The Office Action correctly acknowledges that the combination of Lofall and Piety fails to describe that the alarm curve is also adjusted based on temperature. The Office Action then cites Hoth as purportedly overcoming the deficiencies of the Lofall/Piety combination. However, Hoth actually teaches away from the structural and/operational relationships recited in claim 1 regarding the utilization of temperature. More particularly, Hoth uses temperature data as a multiplier for adjusting a calculated probability of failure numbers, whereas claim 1 recites temperature as a basis for adjusting an alarm curve. Accordingly, the Lofall/Piety/Hoth combination does not constitute an appropriate _prima facie_ combination for rejecting claim 1 under 35 USC 103(a), and this rejection (as well as the rejection of claims depending from claim 1) should be withdrawn.

Appellant will now discuss an alternative basis as to why the Lofall/Piety/Hoth combination does not constitute an appropriate _prima facie_ combination for rejecting claims under 35 USC 103(a). Appellant will discuss below in particular detail the substantial differences in the approach of Hoth compared to the claimed invention. Appellant regrets for the following rather

5

lengthy summary of the process of Hoth. However, it is believed necessary to point out the substantial differences between Hoth and the present invention as to how each very distinctly approaches the relationship between vibration data alarm limits and secondary parameters, such as machine load and temperature.

Hoth describes a complex multi-step method that provides a quantitative prediction of the likelihood of a failure, which Hoth calls a "final failure probability sum." (column 13, line 41) Hoth arrives at that numeric value via a series of learning and then monitoring steps. First, in a learning mode, Hoth teaches the steps of:

- gathering raw vibration amplitude data (RD) over a number of frequency ranges (column 8, lines 31-38)

- using only data which satisfies certain stability requirements, generating twelve hour average vibration frequency values with a 95% statistical confidence level. (column 9, lines 7-19 and colun 10, lines 39-50) for each frequency band and each load range. In this step, Hoth recognizes that there is a relationship between vibration amplitude response and machine load. However, Hoth does not use that relationship for the purpose of adjusting an alarm value, but rather it causes Hoth to establish a plurality frequency bands and load ranges so as to be able to judge the stability of the acquired raw data within a plurality of ranges.

- building an hourly reading (HR) table from raw data each hour and checking to see if a sufficient number of the data points are within the confidence interval for each frequency band and load condition. (column 11, lines 27-42)

- only if the machine is running normally and is stable, entering a monitoring mode. (column 11, lines 42-46)

Once in the monitor mode, the machine is evaluated by comparing hourly average data to the confidence intervals (column 11, lines 49-53) through the following steps:

- hourly data is checked against limits that are based upon the confidence intervals, and if the limits are exceeded, a neural processor subroutine is entered for calculating a failure probability. (column 12, lines 9-32) Note that no limit is

6

changed during this step, or in any step of the process. Each band of hourly data is compared to a respective confidence interval for each vibration band to generate a weighted probability of machine failure. (column 13, lines 1-13)

- applying load to current ratio and differential temperature factors to the weighted probabilities to arrive at a "final failure probability sum". (column 13, lines 33-41) In this manner, vibration data exceeding the confidence interval is caused to have varying effects on the final failure probability sum depending upon the load to current ratio and the differential temperature.

Note that the method of Hoth necessitates the processing of multiple sets of data over a number of load ranges. Furthermore, Hoth never adjusts the confidence interval (i.e. alarm curve) in response to load to current ratio or in response to temperature, but rather, Hoth uses these parameters only to adjust the impact of the calculated failure probability values.

In contrast to the method of Hoth, claim 1 of the present invention provides a much simpler method for evaluating an object to be tested. Claim 1 includes the step of "automatically changing ... the alarm curve according to second and third operating parameters." Hoth never changes an alarm curve; rather, Hoth teaches the necessity of splitting the load parameter into a plurality of ranges in order to provide for a degree of stability in the measured amplitude data. The present invention avoids the necessity of processing multiple sets of data as must be done in the method of Hoth.

Appellant respectfully notes that the CAFC decision in _In re Kumar_, 418 F.3d 1361, 76 USPQ2d 1048, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 2005) states "To render a later invention unpatentable for obviousness, the prior art must enable the later invention." The Hoth reference fails to enable the present invention since it fails to teach any method for automatically changing the amplitude values of an alarm curve. The use of temperature data, as actually described by Hoth, would not enable the claimed invention. Appellant believes it is error for the Examiner to simply say that since Hoth uses temperature (albeit in a completely different manner as in the claimed invention), then Hoth remedies the shortcomings of

7

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

Lofall and Piety. This assertion is not sufficient in view that the specific approach
described by Hoth cannot be disregarded since such an approach would make
the claimed invention (and the resulting prior art combination) inoperable for its
intended purpose. See *In re Gordon*, 733 F.2d 900, 902, 221 USPQ 1125, 1127
(Fed. Cir. 1984) (finding no suggestion to modify a prior art device where the
modification would render the device inoperable for its intended purpose). One
of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine the vastly
different approach described by Hoth with the Lofall/Piety combination. Thus, on
this alternative basis, appellant submits that the combination of Lofall/Piety/Hoth
does not support the rejections under 35 USC 103.

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that neither
Lofall, Piety, nor Hoth, singly or in combination, teach or suggest the structural
and/or operational relationships set forth in claim 1. Accordingly, the
Lofall/Piety/Hoth combination fails to render claim 1 unpatentable under the §103
statutory requirements and this rejection should be withdrawn. Since dependent
claims 4-8, 10, 13, and 15 include the structural and/or operational relationships
respectively recited in claim 1, it is also respectfully submitted that the
Lofall/Piety/Hoth combination also fails to render unpatentable claims 4-8, 10, 13,
and 15. Accordingly, the rejection of claims depending from claim 1, should also
be withdrawn.

A.2   *Arguments Regarding Claim 18*

Independent claim 18 is directed to a method for evaluating a rotating
machine. Claim 18 in part recites adjusting the alarm curve to account for a
difference between first and second temperatures. As discussed above, Hoth not
only fails to teach the foregoing operational relationship but actually teaches
away from it, or, in the alternative, Hoth fails to enable the claimed invention.
Accordingly, the Lofall/Piety/Hoth combination does not constitute an appropriate
prima facie combination for rejecting claim 18 under 35 USC 103(a), and this
rejection should be similarly withdrawn.

8

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

8.   CLAIMS APPENDIX - 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (viii).

A copy of the claims 1, 4-8, 10, 13, 15, and 18 involved in this appeal is attached as a claims appendix under 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (viii).

9.   EVIDENCE APPENDIX - 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (ix)

None is required under 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (ix)

10.   RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX - 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (x)

None is required under 37 CFR 41.37(c) (1) (x)

Respectfully submitted,

Dated:___8/23/07___   By:_____

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9

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

CLAIMS APPENDIX
37 CFR 41.37(c)(1)(viii)

1.   A method for evaluation of a rotating object, the method comprising:

providing a first operating parameter that is an actual rotational speed
value;

automatically recording a frequency spectrum of the object to be tested by
measuring means, wherein the frequency spectrum has first amplitude values
which depend on first frequency values;

automatically using the first frequency values of the frequency spectrum
for normalization in relation to the actual rotational speed value;

automatically forming an alarm curve with second amplitude values which
depend on second frequency values;

automatically using the second frequency values of the alarm curve for
normalization in relation to the actual rotational speed value;

automatically changing the second amplitude values of the alarm curve
according to a second operating parameter, wherein the operating states of the
object to be tested are characterized by the second operating parameter which is
proportional to a load of the object to be tested, and wherein the operating states
of the object to be tested are further characterized by a third operating parameter
which is proportional to a temperature of the object to be tested;

automatically comparing the first amplitude values of the normalized
frequency spectrum with the second amplitude values of the alarm curve which is
changed according to the second operating parameter, and the third operating
parameter; and

using a result of the comparison to evaluate the object to be tested.

4.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the second amplitude values of
the alarm curve are changed according to a function of the operating parameters.

10

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

5.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the alarm curve which is
normalized and changed according to the operating parameters forms an
envelope curve over the normalized frequency spectrum of the object to be
tested in a fault-free normal condition, wherein an alarm is generated if at least
one amplitude value of the normalized frequency spectrum lies outside the
envelope curve.

6.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the measuring means are
fashioned as vibro-acoustic measuring means.

7.   A method according to claim 1 for the use of a spectral evaluation of a
machine.

8.   A method according to claim 1 for the use of monitoring the vibration of
vehicle components.

10.   A method according to claim 4, wherein the function of the operating
parameters is specified by a user.

13.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the alarm curve which is
normalized and changed according to the operating parameters forms an
envelope curve over the normalized frequency spectrum of the object to be
tested in a fault-free normal condition, wherein an alarm is generated if at least
one amplitude value of the normalized frequency spectrum lies outside the
envelope curve.

11

15. A method according to claim 4, wherein the alarm curve which is normalized and changed according to the operating parameters forms an envelope curve over the normalized frequency spectrum of the object to be tested in a fault-free normal condition, wherein an alarm is generated if at least one amplitude value of the normalized frequency spectrum lies outside the envelope curve.

18. A method for evaluating a rotating machine, the method comprising:

establishing an alarm curve of vibration amplitude data versus frequency for a first rotating speed of a rotating machine operating at a first load value;

gathering actual vibration amplitude data versus frequency from the rotating machine at a second rotating speed different than the first rotating speed and at a second load value different than the first load value;

normalizing the actual vibration amplitude data versus frequency to the first rotating speed;

adjusting the alarm curve to account for the difference between the first and second load values;

establishing the alarm curve for a first temperature;

gathering the actual vibration amplitude data versus frequency at a second temperature different from the first temperature;

further adjusting the alarm curve to account for the difference between the first and second temperatures; and

comparing the normalized data and the adjusted alarm curve to evaluate the rotating machine.

12

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

EVIDENCE APPENDIX

None.

13

Serial No. 10/764,295
Attorney Docket No. 2001P07053WOUS

RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

None.

14